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DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, PRM
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Proposal for 2008 Julia Taft (Ambassador's) Fund

1. (SBU) This is a proposal for value-added production training from Zardozi, an Afghan non-profit organization. The project would train 20-30 women in eastern Afghanistan in value-added textile production for international and domestic markets. This project will bring the current value-added jobs in Pakistan back to Afghanistan and provide important livelihood opportunities for women. The project is small enough to be funded by the 2008 Julia Taft Fund.

Project Description

2. (U) Zardozi is one of the only NGOs in Afghanistan that produces high-quality embroidered items for the international market. They also focus on richly embroidered wedding apparel that is essential in Afghan weddings in Afghanistan and among the Afghan diaspora. The project would train 6-8 women in transforming the individual embroidered pieces (made by 1,000 Zardozi-supported home producers) into finished products, e.g., turning a \$1 embroidered square into an \$8 garment. The project would also train 6-12 women in silk weaving and another 6-8 women in high-end silk product manufacturing. The project director will also confer with artisanal producers in Cambodia who rebuilt their family incomes after their civil war by turning individual handicraft items into high-value finished products. Although the Cambodian producers were originally intended to come to Afghanistan, due to security concerns, the project director will go to Cambodia and bring back their suggestions and designs. The project will also employ 2-3 office staffers to handle the project's administrative and logistical issues.

Justification

3. (SBU) Many women in eastern Afghanistan are returned refugees who are marginalized in Afghanistan's conservative culture and have no means to contribute to the family income. Embroidery is part of Afghan culture and generally a specialist female skill. Zardozi already has 1,000 home embroiderers but their output is taken to Pakistan for manufacturing into a finished product. This project would train women in Afghanistan to do that value-added tailoring work. The silk production project will also be the first time women have been trained in Afghanistan on silk production weaving looms, traditionally reserved for men. While many NGOs train women in tailoring and embroidery with no specific market access or quality target in mind, Zardozi's bottomline-based approach stresses high quality and direct market linkages. Zardozi, more than almost any other NGO, has the highest likelihood of increasing women's incomes in a very real sense. The beneficiaries will be drawn from the eastern provinces of Afghanistan, which have the highest refugee return rate in the country. As of this year, 74,000 of the year's 111,000 returns are in the east. Zardozi will ensure that at least 50% of the beneficiaries are returnees.

Budget

14. (U) Zardozi requests USD \$19,980 to be spent as follows:

Tailors' Training = 2-3 months

Senior Tailor to Peshawar	300
Trainer x 3 months	600
2-3 months, trainee allowance (x6)	2700
Machines x8 (incl. overlocker)	2000
Small equipment	400
Production facilities	160
Practice materials x6	600

Silk Manufacturing Training = 2 months

Travel to Cambodia for training	4000
Samples, product development	500
Herat supply line sourcing	1000
Practice Materials	1500
Trainee allowance (x5)	1000
Small equipment (x5)	400
Production facilities	100
International Trainer	1000
Zardozi, travel and supervision	1000

Management and Integration

1 Production manager	400
Zardozi Program Mgr (x30%)	1500
1 Administrator	450
1 computer and connectivity	2400
Prod. Mgr & Admin to Peshawar	600
Peshawar Senior Tailor (x25%)	120
Peshawar Production mgr (x25%)	150
Peshawar accounts (x25%)	200
Rent room, three months	300
Generator	1000

Zardozi will also contribute \$9580 toward the project.

Implementing Organization

15. (U) Zardozi has 25 years of experience in economic outreach for women home producers and decentralized production. Formerly supported with Danish and European funding, Zardozi is largely self-sufficient.

Certification

16. (U) If PRM approves this proposal and provides post with an allotment notice advising funds are available for obligation, post certifies that it has the authority and capacity to award the grant to the intended recipient to the end of the current fiscal year.

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